

REMARKS

A reconsideration is requested of Claims 1-16, wherein Claims 1, 2, 3, 15 and 16 have been amended.

By way of the foregoing amendments to drawings, the objections in paragraphs 2 and 5 have been addressed. In particular, the line from reference number 104 now leads to the absorbent body. In Figure 1, the line from 113 now includes an arrow. In addition, reference number 125 now extends to the structure it denotes. In addition, reference number 513 has been removed from Figure 5. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objections to the drawings is respectfully requested.

By way of the foregoing amendments to the specification, the objections indicated in paragraphs 1 and 3-4 have been addressed. In particular, the specification has been amended to remove these informalities. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objections to the specification is respectfully requested.

By way of the foregoing amendments to Claims 12 and 13, the objections under paragraph 6 of the Official Action have been addressed. In particular, Claims 12 and 13 have been amended to change the term "facing" to --faceable--. However, with regard to the Examiner's position that in Claim 1, second to last line, the "the" (second) should be --a--, Applicant respectfully disagrees. In particular, "the thickness direction" is defined in the preamble. Accordingly, withdrawal of the claim objections is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,613,955 to *Lindsay et al.*

The present invention, as defined in independent Claims 1, 15 and 16, pertains to an absorbent product and method for using an absorbent product. Claim 1 defines an absorbent product including a liquid permeable top side, a liquid impermeable bottom side and two side edges extending in the longitudinal direction. An absorbent body is arranged between the top side and the bottom side and includes an absorption part formed by a preformed, dehydrated hydrogel, which, as a result of the preforming, comprises a section which, when wetted, swells in the thickness direction to form an elevation portion on the top side of the product.

Claim 15 defines an absorbent product including liquid permeable means, liquid impermeable means and means for absorbing liquid arranged between the liquid permeable means and the liquid impermeable means. The absorption means comprise means for expanding which is made from a hydrogel, which, when wetted, swells in a thickness direction and forms an elevation portion on the liquid permeable means.

Claim 16 defines a method of using an absorbent product. An absorbent product is provided having a liquid permeable portion, a liquid impermeable portion, and an absorption body arranged between a liquid permeable portion and a liquid impermeable portion. The absorption body is formed into an elongate shape from preformed, dehydrated hydrogel. The absorbent product is positioned onto supporting clothing of the user whereby upon wetting, the absorption body swells and forms a raised portion on the liquid permeable portion.

To more clearly define the patentable aspects of the present invention, independent Claims 1, 15 and 16 have been amended to recite that the hydrogel is formed through a part of the liquid permeable section of the absorbent product. These features are believed to define over *Lindsay et al.*

Lindsay et al. relates to absorbent articles with wicking barrier cuffs. The absorbent core may include a central rising member under the central absorbent member or under or within the absorbent core. However, *Lindsay et al.* does not disclose that the hydrogel is formed through a part of the liquid permeable section, as now defined in independent Claim 1, 15 and 16. Accordingly, *Lindsay et al* fails to disclose the patentable features of independent Claims 1, 15 and 16.

For at least the foregoing reasons, it is submitted that the method and product of independent Claims 1, 15 and 16, and the claims depending therefrom, is patentably distinguishable over the applied document.


Should any questions arise in connection with this application, or should the Examiner believe a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any remaining

issues pertaining to this application, the undersigned respectfully requests that she be contacted at the number indicated below.

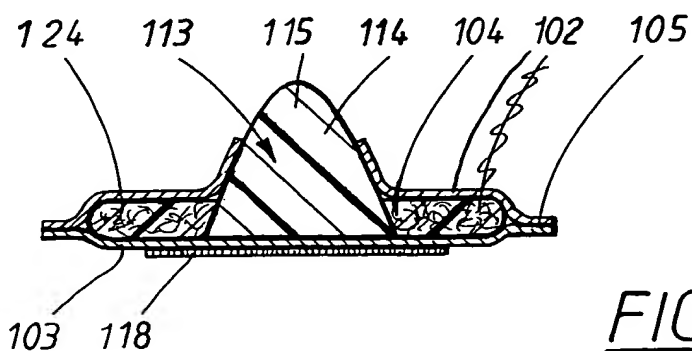
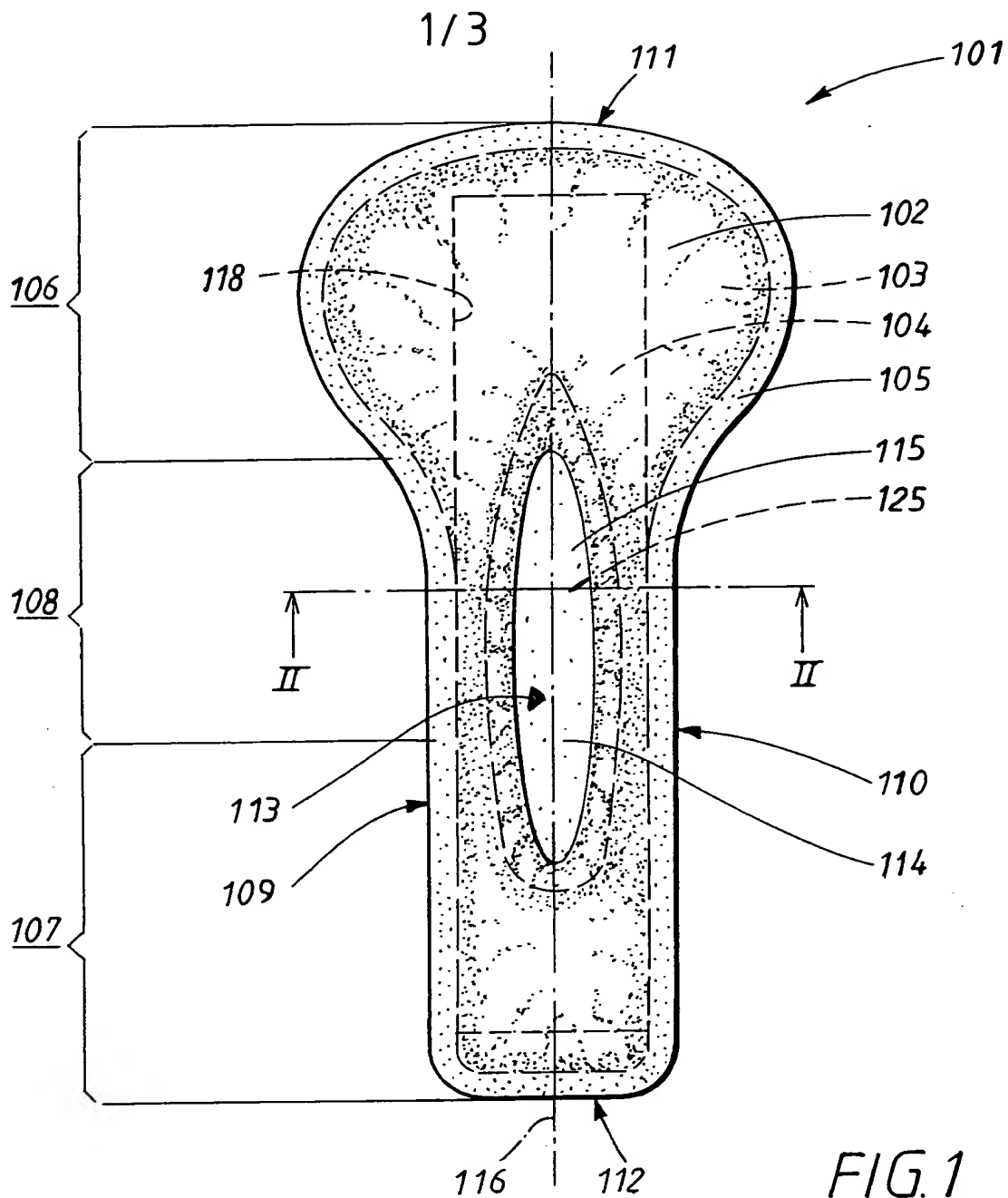
Respectfully submitted,

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Date: December 29, 2003

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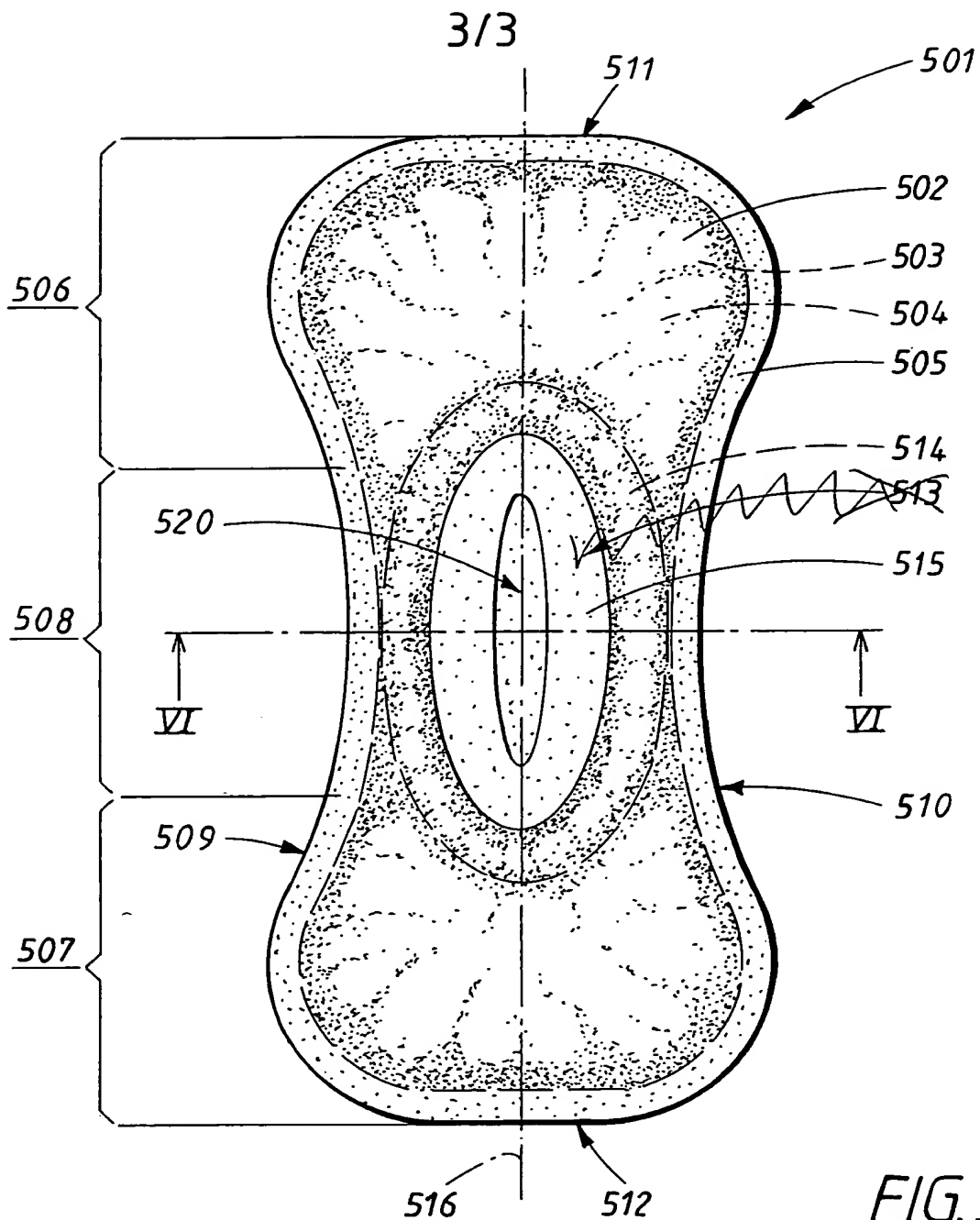


FIG. 5

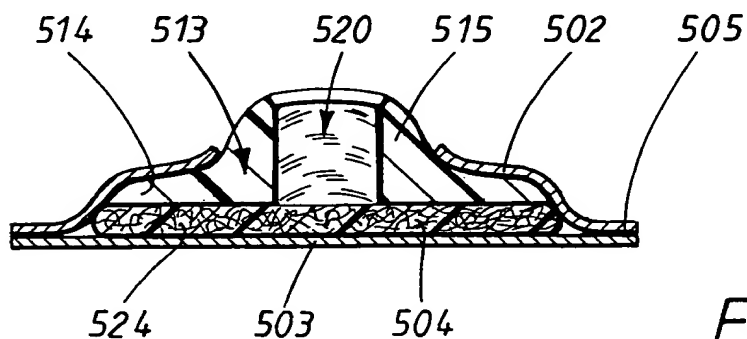


FIG. 6